1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
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173 them with their magic arts, and indeed killed by sorcery several of their most prominent citizens." *

612 Like other Canarese people, the Badagas have exogamous septs or kūlas, of which Māri, Madhave (marriage), Kastūri (musk), and Belli (silver) are examples. A very large number of families belong to the Māri and Madhave septs, which were time after time given as the sept name in reply to my enquiries. It may be noted that Belli occurs as an exogamous sept of the Canarese classes Vakkaliga, Toreya, and Kuruba, and Kastūri is recorded in my notes as a sept of the Vakkaligas and Telugu Kammas.

361 The Badagas dwell in extensive villages, generally
342 situated on the summit of a low hillock, composed of rows of comfortable thatched or tiled houses, and surrounded by the fields, which yield the crops. The houses are not separate tenements, but a line of dwellings under one continuous roof, and divided by party
[363] walls. Sometimes there are two or three, or more lines, forming streets. Each house is partitioned off into an
342 outer (edumane) and inner apartment (ozhaga or
[343] ōgamane). If the family has cows or buffaloes yielding
[562] milk, a portion of the latter is converted into a milk-house (hāgōttu), in which the milk is stored, and which
• [783] no woman may enter. Even males who are under pollution, from having touched or passed near a Kota or Paraiyan, or other cause, may not enter it until they
342 have had a ceremonial bath. To some houses a loft, made of bamboo posts, is added, to serve as a store-
349 house. In every Badaga village there is a raised platform composed of a single boulder or several stones
[361] with an erect stone slab set up thereon, called sūththu

* Gazetteer of the Nilgiris.

622 matrimonial, he had the power to throw obstacles in the
(584) way of such marriages taking place. The monegar, in
virtue of his position, wielded much power, and ruled
(661) the village as he pleased." In the old days, it is said,
when he visited any village within his jurisdiction, the
monegar had the privilege of having the best women or
maids of the place to share his cot according to his
choice. In former times, the monegar used to wear a
silver ring as the badge of office, and some Badagas
still have in their possession such rings, which are pre-
served as heirlooms, and worshipped during festivals.
The term monegar is, at the present day, used for the
village revenue official and munsiff.

612 I gather that each exogamous sept has its headman,
called Gouda, who is assisted by a Parpattikāran, and
decides tribal matters, such as disputes, divorce, etc.
627 Fines, when inflicted, go towards feasting the tribe, and
doing pūja (worship) to the gods. In the case of a
dispute between two parties, one challenges the other to
take an oath in a temple before the village council. A
declaration on oath settles the matter at issue, and the
624 parties agree to abide by it. It is the duty of the
Parpattikāran to make arrangements for such events as
the Heththeswāmi, Devvē and Bairaganni festivals, and
795 the buffalo sacrificing festival at Konakkore. The Par-
• 783 pattikāran takes part in the purification of excommuni-
cated members of the tribe, when they are received
back into it, for example, on release from prison. The
tongue of the delinquent is burnt with a hot sandal stick,
and a new waist thread put on. He is taken to the
(624) temple, where he stands amidst the assembled Badagas,
who touch his head with a cane. He then prostrates
himself at the feet of the Parpattikāran, who smears his
624 forehead with sacred ashes. It is, further, the duty of

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648 by the Todas to the elders of a tribe with which they have very close relations, and it is perhaps significant that no similar sign of respect is shown to Toda elders by the Badagas."

648 439 Every Badaga family has its Muttu Kota, from whom it gets the agricultural implements, pots, hoes, etc. In return, the Kotas receive an annual present of food-grains, mustard and potatoes. For a Kota funeral, the Badagas have to give five rupees or a quantity of rice, and a buffalo. The pots obtained from the Kotas are not used immediately, but kept for three days in the (824) jungle, or in a bush in some open spot. They are then taken to the outer apartment of the house, and kept there for three days, when they are smeared with the bark of *Meliosma pungens* (the tūd tree of the Todas) and culms of *Andropogon Schœnanthus* (bzambe hullu). • (783) Thus purified, the pots are used for boiling water in for three days, and may then be used for any purpose. The Badagas are said to give a present of grain annually to the Todas. Every Toda mand (or mad) seems to have its own group of Badaga families, who pay them this gudu, as it is called. "There are," Dr. Rivers writes, "several regulations concerning the food of the palol (dairy-man of a Toda sacred dairy). Any grain he eats must be that provided by the Badagas. At the present time more rice is eaten than was formerly the case. This is not grown by the Badagas, but nevertheless the rice for the palol must be obtained through them. The palol wears garments of a dark grey material made in the Coimbatore district. They are brought to the palol by the Badaga called tikelfmav. The earthenware vessels of the inner room (of the ti dairy) are not obtained from the Kotas, like the ordinary vessels, but are made by Hindus, and are procured through the Badagas."

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852 (868) sitting down, milks a small quantity into the honē. This is his first initiation into the duty of milking, and it is that he may not commit mistakes on the very first day of his milking that the honē is previously filled almost to the brim. The boy takes the vessel filled with milk into his house, and pours some of the sacred fluid into all his household eating vessels—a sign that from that day he has taken up on himself the responsibility of supplying the family with milk. He also throws some milk in the faces of his parents and relatives. They receive it very kindly, and bless him, and request him to continue thus to milk the buffaloes, and bring plenty and prosperity to the house. After this, the boy enters the milk-house (hāgōttu), and places milk in his honē there. From this moment, and all through his life, he may enter into that room, and this is therefore considered a very important ceremony."

234 788 A cow or buffalo, which has calved for the first time, has to be treated in a special manner. For three or five days it is not milked. A boy is then selected to milk it. He must not sleep on a mat, or wear a turban, and, instead of tying his cloth round his waist, must wear (784) it loosely over his body. Meat is forbidden, and he must avoid, and not speak to polluting classes, such as Irulas and Kotas, and menstruating women. On the • (783) (824) day appointed for milking the animal, the boy bathes, and proceeds to milk it into a new honē purified by smearing a paste of *Meliosma* (tūd) leaves and bark over it, and heating it over a fire. The milk is taken to 782 a stream, where three cups are made of *Argyreia* (mīnige) 788 leaves, into which a small quantity of the milk is placed. (234) The cups are then put in the water. The remainder of the milk in the honē is also poured into the stream. In some places, especially where a Mādeswara temple is

ance, divorce can only be obtained through the decree of the panchāyat (tribal council). Moreover, if it has not been performed, a man cannot claim the paternity of the child. The ceremony is called kanni kattodu or kanni hākodu (thread tying or throwing). The husband and wife are seated in the midst of those who have assembled for the occasion, and the former asks his father-in-law whether he may throw the thread round his wife's neck, and, having received permission, proceeds to do so. If he gets the thread, which must have no knots in it, entangled in the woman's bunch of hair (kondai), which is made large for the occasion by the addition of false hair, he is fined three rupees. On the day of the ceremony, the man and his wife are supposed to be under pollution, and sit in the verandah to receive presents. The mats used by them for sleeping on are cleaned on the following morning, and they get rid of the pollution by bathing.

A first confinement must not take place within the house, and the verandah is converted into a lying-in chamber, from which the woman is, after delivery, removed to the outer apartment, where she remains till she is free from pollution by catching sight of the crescent moon. If a woman has been delivered at her father's house, she returns to the home of her husband within a month of the birth of the child on an auspicious day. On arrival there, the infant is placed near the feet of an old man standing by a lamp within the milk-house. Placing his right hand over the head of the infant, the old man blesses it, and a feast is held, before the commencement of which two cups, one containing milk, and the other cooked rice, are produced. All the relations take up a little of the milk and rice, and touch the tongue of the baby with them.

764 gaudy petticoats and smart turbans. "No woman," Mr.
[292] Natesa Sastri writes, "mingles in the funeral dance
if the dead person is a man, but, if the deceased is a
[562] woman, one old woman, the nearest relative of the dead, takes part in it." But, at the funerals of two men which we witnessed, a few women danced together with the men. Usually the tribesmen continue to arrive until 2 or 3 P.M. Relations collect outside the village, and advance in a body towards the car, some, especially the sons-in-law of the dead man, riding on ponies, some of them carrying sāmai grain. As they approach the car, they shout "Ja! hoch; Ja! hoch." The Muttu Kotas bring a double iron sickle with imitation buffalo horns on the tip, which is placed, with a hatchet, buguri (flute), and walking stick, on the car or on the ground beside it. When all are assembled, the cot is carried to an open space between the house and the burning-ground, followed by the car and a party of women carrying the baskets containing grain, etc. The car is then stripped of its trappings, and hacked to pieces. The widow is brought close to the cot, and removes her nose ornament (elemukkuthi), and other jewels. At both the funerals which we witnessed, the widow had a narrow strip of coloured chintz over her shoulders. Standing near the corpse, she removed a bit of wire from her ear-rings, a lock of hair, and a palm leaf roll from the lobe of the ear, and tied them up in the cloth of her dead husband. After her, the sisters of the dead man cut off a lock of
(824) hair, and, in like manner, tied it in the cloth. Women attached to a man by illegitimate ties sometimes also cut off a lock of hair, and, tying it to a twig of *Dodonæa*
• (783) *viscosa*, place it inside the cloth. Very impressive is the recitation, or after-death confession of a dead man's sins by an elder of the tribe standing at the head of the

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764 corpse, and rapidly chanting the following lines, or a
783 variation thereof, while he waves his right hand during
126 each line towards the feet. The reproduction of the
123 recitation in my phonograph never failed to impress the daily audience of Badagas, Kotas and Todas.

539 This is the death of Āndi.
764 In his memory the calf of the cow Belle has been set free.
From this world to the other.
783 He goes in a car.
Everything the man did in this world.
All the sins committed by his ancestors.
All the sins committed by his forefathers.
All the sins committed by his parents.
All the sins committed by himself.
The estranging of brothers.
Shifting the boundary line.
Encroaching on a neighbour's land by removing the hedge.
Driving away brothers and sisters.
Cutting the kalli tree stealthily.
Cutting the mulli tree outside his boundary.
Dragging the thorny branches of the kotte tree.
Sweeping with a broom.
Splitting green branches.
Telling lies.
Uprooting seedlings.
Plucking growing plants, and throwing them in the sun.
Giving young birds to cats.
Troubling the poor and cripples.
Throwing refuse water in front of the sun
Going to sleep after seeing an eclipse of the moon.
Looking enviously at a buffalo yielding an abundance of milk.
Being jealous of the good crops of others.
Removing boundary stones.
Using a calf set free at the funeral.
Polluting water with dirt.
Urinating on burning embers.
Ingratitude to the priest.
Carrying tales to the higher authorities.

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539 Poisoning food.
764 Not feeding a hungry person.
Not giving fire to one half frozen.
783 Killing snakes and cows.
Killing lizards and blood-suckers.
Showing a wrong path.
Getting on the cot, and a'lowing his father-in-law to sleep on the ground.
Sitting on a raised verandah, and driving thence his mother-in-law.
Going against natural instincts.
Troubling daughters-in-law.
Breaking open lakes.
Breaking open reservoirs of water.
Being envious of the prosperity of other villages.
Getting angry with people.
Misleading travellers in the forest.
Though there be three hundred such sins,
Let them all go with the calf set free to-day.
May the sins be completely removed!
May the sins be forgiven!
May the door of heaven be open!
May the door of hell be closed!
May the hand of charity be extended!
May the wicked hand be shrivelled!
May the door open suddenly!
May beauty or splendour prevail everywhere!
May the hot pillar be cooled!
May the thread bridge * become light!
May the pit of perdition be closed!
May he reach the golden pillar!
Holding the feet of the six thousand Athis,
Holding the feet of the twelve thousand Pathis,
Holding the feet of Brahma,
Holding the feet of the calf set free to-day,
May he reach the abode of Siva!
So mote it be.

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* The bridge spanning the river of death, which the blessed cross in safety.

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(539)

The recitation is repeated thrice, and a few Badagas repeat the last words of each line after the elder. It was noticed by the Rev. A. C. Clayton that, during the recitation, the people surrounded the bier on three sides, leaving a lane open to the west. The sins of the dead man were transferred to another as sin-bearer, and finally passed away down the lane. As the ceremony witnessed by us differs materially from the account thereof given by Gover nearly forty years ago, I may quote his description. "By a conventional mode of expression, the sum total of sins a man may do is said to be thirteen hundred. Admitting that the deceased has committed them all, the performer cries aloud 'Stay not their flight to God's pure feet.' As he closes, the whole assembly chants aloud 'Stay not their flight.' Again the performer enters into details, and cries 'He killed the crawling snake. It is a sin.' In a moment the last word is caught up, and all the people cry 'It is a sin.' As they shout, the performer lays his hand upon the calf. The sin is transferred to the calf. Thus the whole catalogue is gone through in this impressive way. But this is not enough. As the last shout 'Let all be well' dies away, the performer gives place to another, and again confession is made, and all the people shout 'It is a sin.' A third time it is done. Then, still in solemn silence, the calf is let loose. Like the Jewish scapegoat, it may never be used for secular work." Dr. Rivers writes that "the Badagas let loose a calf at a funeral, to bear the sins of the deceased. It is possible that the calf in the Toda ceremony may have the same [171] significance. If so, the practice has not improbably been borrowed, and the fact that the bell which is hung on the neck of the calf is kept by Kotas or Badagas suggests that the whole incident may have been bor-

1: Thurston & Rangachari E,G-4,5 (no date) 1909
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764 rowed by the Todas from one or other of these races."
• 783 At the funerals, of which we were spectators, no calf was
(171) brought near the corpse, and the celebrants of the rites were satisfied with the mere mention by name of a calf, which is male or female according to the sex of the deceased. At the funeral witnessed by the Rev. A. C. Clayton, a cow-buffalo was led three times round the bier, and a little of its milk, drawn at the time, put into the mouth of the corpse. Then a buffalo calf was led thrice round the bier, and the dead man's hand laid on its head. By this act, the calf was supposed to receive all the sins of the deceased. It was then driven away to a great distance, that it might contaminate no one, and
764 it was said that it would never be sold, but looked on
843 as a dedicated sacred animal. If a dead man leaves a widow in a state of pregnancy, who has not performed the kanni kattodu or marriage thread ceremony, this must be gone through before the corpse is taken to the pyre, in order to render the child legitimate. The pregnant woman is, at the time of the funeral, brought close to the cot, and a near relation of the deceased, taking up a cotton thread, twisted in the form of a necklace without any knots, throws it round her neck. Sometimes the hand of the corpse is lifted up with the thread, and made to place it round the neck. At the funeral of the young man, Mr. Clayton saw this ceremony performed on his pregnant wife. After a turmeric-dyed cord had been taken from the hands of the corpse and tied round her neck, she was again brought to the side of the bier, and her ear-rings, nose ornaments, and other articles of jewellery, were removed in token that she had
764 become a widow. Soon after the recitation of sins, all
(824) the agnates go to the house of the dead man, at the entrance to which a gunny-bag is spread, whereon a small

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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614 11. Ward, 1821, lxxi, Hough, 1829, 88; Metz, 1864, 54; Grigg, 1880, 221; Francis, 1908, 131. The claim was based on their membership in the Brahma sept.

000 12. Kittel, 1894, 1650, gives the Kannada *Hāruva* as meaning 'Brahmin'; Burrow & Emeneau, 1961, 273, n. 3366, translate it as 'Brahmin' or 'seer'.

262 13. Benbow, 1930, 9. This claim is dubious, since the pollution of meat normally
562 cannot be removed from a woman, only from a man.
783 14. Metz, 1864, 50–51, 63–64; see above, 21, 41. *Adikari*, meaning 'powerful man', was once used as the title of a village headman or magistrate appointed by the local chieftain, acting for the ruling power in Mysore.

614 15. Since about 1960 some of them have taken to wearing the *linga* again.

16. Most Badagas now consider these Adikiris as Gauda, as they do Be:das and Kumba:ras.

000 17. An art they are said to have taught the Kotas.

18. Thurston, 1909, vol. VII, 176; see above, 32–33. The Toreas of Ha:sanu:ru now intermarry with those of Mysore.

615 19. See below, 123. Belli Gowder, 1938–1941, 11, gives his gratuity at a funeral as 'a sum of Re. 1.25 along with ten measures of rice'.

20. Harkness, 1832, 109; Breeks, 1873, 14. It may be that these writers confused the Toreas with Kaikolans, however: twelve male and nine female Kaikolans were enumerated in Todana:du early in 1821; Grigg, 1880, 26. They were a low-status caste of weavers and musicians from Coimbatore, some of whose women were dedicated in a temple to the art of prostitution; Thurston, 1907, 29–30; 'Miles', 1951, 200–202.

609 21. Here a note about commensality with other non-Badagas. Wodeas and other Lingayats never allow a Nilgiri tribesman to enter beyond the veranda; neither may any non-Lingayat visitor from the plains enter. Ha:ruvas and all lower phratries permit Todas and until recently Kurumbas, Irulas and Kasuvas to eat in the outer room. Kotas and any lowlander thought to be a Hindu untouchable are too polluting to be allowed past the veranda.

[p. 98 is blank]

2: Hockings E-4,5 (1962-1977) 1980
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10

Religious and Social Change in the Twentieth Century

We have seen how some aspects of Badaga culture have undergone significant change, how the economy was monetized, how national systems of law and administration were adopted by Badagas and how a Christian community became a persisting feature of the social organization. We now examine what other religious changes have come about, what has happened to the Christians and how the society has adjusted to new patterns of communication, marriage and residence during the present century.

The process of modernization has brought about some changes in Badaga religion. Temples may nowadays have electric lighting, for example, although strictly electrical cable is a polluting material as it is covered with rubber, which conservative Badagas consider to be 'like leather'. Polluting anthropologists and other strangers, including government dignitaries, are now conducted into some of the temples. Another change has come with the new value placed on time: ceremonies that used to last for three days are now finished in one, those that ran for a week now last for only three days; and in general there is a short-cutting of the inessential elements of ritual. Some ceremonies show signs of dying out, so irrelevant have they become. The annual festival for Be:da Sa:mi ('Lord of the Hunt') is now rarely performed. The aid of this god was sought to protect the villagers and their fields from tigers and other wild animals (Metz, 1864, 67-68; Francis, 1908, 339-340; Emeneau, 1971, 5, 42, 564, 744); but today, with the increase in

[p. 213]

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
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salt being one of the few items that the hill people used to carry up from market towns on the plains during their annual trading expeditions.[5] We may perhaps infer that the salt-giving was already a ceremony from the tradition that the men in these parties who were carrying salt specifically to give to their buffaloes were supposed to keep themselves in a ritually pure state, and were not allowed to carry any other trade items at the same time. One man would therefore carry salt for a number of men in the trading party, and they in turn would carry his purchases. Salt intended for domestic use was never treated with such reverence. Once a market had been established in the new British hill town of Ootacamund, *ca.* 1825, these old trading expeditions fell into abeyance because the Badagas could then purchase salt without having to leave the hills.[6]

The annual ceremony of giving "new-grass salt," called *'ka:ruppu,* is performed separately by each hamlet in March of every year, on the Monday that falls within the eight days following the new moon. At about the time of the new moon itself one man is selected from every household in each hamlet to represent that family; generally the head of the family assumes the role, unless the purificatory preparations are too burdensome for him.

Early in the morning of the ceremony, after the house has been purified, each of these men goes out to his cattle shed and brings in the salt he has purchased. This coarse salt is then powdered in a mortar inside the house with a special iron bar supplied by the Kota craftsmen.

At the appropriate time the hamlet headman comes along each street calling out, "Are you ready?" Each celebrant then picks up his powdered salt in its basket[7] and stands near the doorway. At a signal from the headman, the man who represents the Great House (i.e., that of the hamlet's founding family) is the first to leave his doorway. He goes and stands on the village green, and all of the other men selected immediately come out and line up behind him. They then start off for the stream where the salt-feeding will take place. The man from the Great House stays in the lead. At some distance behind this party of celebrants other members of their families follow, driving the cattle or just coming along to watch; but no women can be present.

This group goes to the bank of a stream near the hamlet, carrying their baskets of salt, iron rods, pots, and hoes. Near the stream the man from the Great House digs a shallow, round hole with his hoe, two to three feet wide and a foot deep. The other men then follow suit, each using his own hoe to dig a hole for his own cattle. During the present century, however, the Badaga cattle herds have become much smaller than before, and so only one man from each lineage is usually selected to dig a pit for all the cattle belonging to that lineage. (Generally a Badaga hamlet is made up of three or four lineages, one at least of which is recognized as having descended from the hamlet founder.) After each of these pits has been dug, the loose dirt in it is brushed out with a branch of the *'hubbe* plant.[8]

The sun is now in the east, for it is still morning. When the pits have been dug, the man from the Great House takes a handful of salt from his

3: Hockings E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
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121 the stream, the cattle shed, and the hearth. Furthermore, the participants in
796 this ceremony do all they can to insure that they are in a state of purity,
and that they do nothing to cause a mishap during this particular day.

●783 Let us now examine these points in more detail. The requirements of
ritual purity and bodily cleanliness are a *sine qua non* for the performance
of any ceremony. If a man does not approach the gods with the knowledge
that he has done all that he can to be in a pure state, he has little hope that
175 his prayers will be answered. In pre-British days, when the salt had to be
purchased in the plains below, it received special treatment from the mo-
437 ment of purchase onward to insure that it would not become polluted
439 before the ceremony. The men who were to carry the salt up the mountain
783 slopes were not to carry anything else; contact with ordinary foodstuffs
would pollute this particular salt. The annual trading expeditions were
normally timed so as to fall a few weeks before the salt-giving ceremony.
Nowadays a Badaga simply buys his own salt in the town market and
brings it home without special ritual precautions.

231 High in the roof of each cattle shed are shelves on which various dairy
778 articles are stored. The man who brings the salt home is supposed to take it
783 straight to the cattle shed and place it on one of these shelves; he must not
bring it directly into his house, even though he will later have to do so
when the ceremony is about to begin. It is felt that the salt would become
polluted in the house if it were brought into an unpurified room where
sexual activity has occurred. The cattle shed, though not considered a temple
like the Toda dairy, is a pure and sacred place because milk is stored
783 there. When the salt is finally brought into each purified house for powder-
ing, it is whisked around the mortar with the help of a freshly cut twig
796 of wild *'hubbe* (also used for loosening any salt that remains on the bottom
of the basket). The Badagas have two kinds of broom, one for indoor use
(824) and one for outside; but both are considered impure because of what they
have come in contact with, and so cannot be used for sweeping the salt
(412) around while it is being powdered. The used part of the *'hubbe* branch is
(783) thrown away after this, and the unused remainder is placed on top of the
salt. From the time of purchase onward, this salt is always carried in a
special basket kept only for this purpose.

783 It is not only the salt that must be kept in a ritually pure state; the
man selected to perform the ceremony on behalf of each household is also
under certain restrictions. From the day of the new moon until after the
salt has been given to the cattle this man must not shave, have sexual re-
lations, cut his finger or toe nails, or stay overnight anywhere other than
in his own home. By observing all these prohibitions he is believed to build
(765) up a state of personal purity. (Were a man to cut his hair and shave, it
would suggest he had recently attended a funeral and was still in the
inauspicious state of mourning for a deceased relative.) The culmination
of this spiritual preparation comes on the night preceding the ceremony,
when he must sleep alone on a sack on the earthen floor, wearing cotton
and without any other bedding.

(356) Early the following morning the house has to be purified too. After the

3: Hockings: E-5 (1962-1963) 1968
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356 783 (237) womenfolk have bathed, they clean the house thoroughly, sprinkle the floor with fresh, semi-liquid cowdung (in Indian thinking, a purifier), and then bring a clean supply of water into the house in clean pots. Not until these preliminaries have been completed and the house can also be considered pure is the man allowed to go to the cattle shed and bring the new salt into his house for powdering.

783 796 By the time the representatives of each family are ready to leave their houses, therefore, they have done all that they possibly can to insure that their persons, their homes, and their salt are in a ritually pure condition. From this point onward there is no further attempt to increase their purity; instead the men lavish care on making no inauspicious slip in their movements.

796 (824) (787) This is thought to be a joyful ceremony, and the acts done to promote an auspicious atmosphere are many. Strings of hill mango[9] leaves are hung over the doorways of the houses to indicate that an auspicious ceremony is in progress. As the men prepare to leave their houses with the salt, there are careful precautions to insure that the man from the Great House is the first to step outside; it would be an ill-omened lack of deference should anyone else precede him. He goes and stands on the *'hattane*, the village green, but he is careful to face away from the houses. The other men to perform the ceremony then line up behind him; were the leader to look around it would indicate that he was faltering or turning back from the performance of an auspicious ceremony.

(787) Thus when the man from the Great House feels that it is time to start off toward the stream with his followers, he cannot look behind, but he asks if all of them have come. The reply that the men give must always be "Yes"; again, it would mean an ill-omened delay for them to answer otherwise. If the leader suspects that in fact the party is not yet ready to leave, he may pose his question in an indirect fashion, as for example, "We are proceeding." If some men have still to reach the green, the reply will be a half-assent such as, "You can if you want to." A negative answer should never be given. If everyone necessary is present, on the other hand, someone merely says "Yes."

It is important that nobody, even in casual conversation, use phrases such as "it is finished" or "it is completed," from the time they leave their houses until they return to the hamlet again. This too would be most inauspicious. The logic underlying the proscription, according to one old man, is that "we should not limit, finish, or complete our society."

While en route to the stream the party must never stop; nothing must block them in the performance of such a beneficial ceremony. Should they meet any other group of people, the latter must give way; and if the other group is going to an inauspicious ceremony such as a funeral they should hide out of sight of the salt-bearing party. (This is also true of the return home afterwards.) Throughout this journey the man from the Great House must remain in front of everyone else, and when they reach (576) the stream he must dig his pit first. Deference to him is expressed again

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threshold first; to plant the left foot before the right would bring the ceremony to a most inauspicious end.

Even though the ceremony has concluded, the men who have performed in it take various precautions to insure that they retain their state of purity for the remainder of the day. The meal that they eat is a vegetarian one; thus they avoid polluting themselves and their houses by having meat cooked on this occasion. To start the meal with butter is very auspicious, since eating butter is in Badaga thinking a sign of affluence and good luck. When the men have finished the meal they are careful to wash in cold water—the prescribed means of washing whenever Badagas wish to remain in a pure state. Afterwards they can clean and repair the cattle shed if they wish, for this is a meritorious act performed in a sacred place. Otherwise the only permitted activities are the cleaning of their clothes and of themselves.

Finally, we must consider the social relations which are given expression during the ceremony. The various sources of the community's welfare and of its power structure are reflected in the ceremony, albeit in symbolic reference. The family is represented usually by its male head, otherwise by a chosen male representative. The lineage is nowadays symbolized in the common pit used by all the cattle of each lineage. The entire hamlet community is represented in concerted action by the party of men who come from every household in the hamlet, as well as by the man from the Great House who is the living descendant of the founding ancestor.

One curious element is the habit of feeding each celebrant afterwards in the outer, less sanctified, room of his house. Men regularly eat in the inner room; the people who normally must eat in the outer room are the women and all visitors from lower-status phratries of the Badaga community. It would seem that the man who gives salt to his cattle is confident of his own ritual purity and that of his entire house on this occasion. By eating in the outer room he suggests that status differences between men and women, and between his phratry and others, are of no importance provided ritual purity prevails. This attitude is also reflected in other aspects of Badaga culture: people of higher and lower ranking clans intermarry, both hypergamously and hypogamously, and members of lower ranking phratries sometimes participate in the temple rituals of higher phratries without polluting the temples.

Women are excluded altogether from the salt-giving ceremony, if only because there is a risk that the presence of a ritually unclean woman might subvert the benefits looked for from God on this auspicious occasion. And yet the women do play a necessary "backstage" role in cleaning the house, decorating it, bringing in water, and cooking the meal. Segregation of women from the ceremony underlines a basic fact of hamlet organization: the hamlet is exogamous, and hence all wives in it are "outsiders," members initially of other hamlets. Furthermore, women inherit neither land nor cattle. Symbolically the ceremony concludes an annual pact between the men and God for the fruitful blessing of crops, cattle, and children, all of which in Badaga law belong to men alone. Even so, the oldest woman

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that they do in the Badaga one. This is in keeping with the Toda practice of keeping women altogether separate from anything that touches upon the herding of buffaloes and the rituals of the dairy-temple, for fear that they pollute the sacrosanct (Rivers 1906: 245).

For the Todas, this is a ceremony which makes reference to what is important in the man's religious life: the priest, the grades of purity, the dairy-temple, the various grades of buffalo, the stream water, and the highly sacred hill mango tree. It is only after the ceremony has been completed and men are singing and dancing that songs may refer, as we have seen, to the more secular blessings of Toda life: calves, rain showers, plentiful milk, and fertile women, as well as the hope for divine favors.

From the field work of Rivers and Emeneau it therefore appears that social groupings are not made visible in the Toda ceremony to the extent that they are in the comparable Badaga one. What is highly visible in the Toda ceremony, however, is an important principle of social differentiation: ceremonial purity. Only the priests are ceremonially pure; ordinary Toda men acting as onlookers lack this purity and so cannot perform dairy rituals. Some men are polluted by having recently attended funerals for fellow clansmen. Men who are so affected should mark the fact by tying their hair in a knot on the front of the head; they are not permitted to drink the buttermilk or eat the festive puffed millet that others who watch the salt-giving are offered.

Women, because of their lack of purity, do not attend any dairy ceremonies. In Badaga society, however, ritual purity, although a desired personal state, is not the important principle of social organization that it is for Todas and for Hindu castes living elsewhere in India; the Badagas emphasize seniority of status instead.

In both Toda and Badaga communities the salt-giving is treated as a sacred ritual rather than a routine act of cattle herding; in both there is some indication of what material blessings man hopes for, and in both ceremonies a major principle of social organization is made visible to participants. We may recall the generalization of Radcliffe-Brown (1958: 17): "In primitive societies any things that have important effects on the social life necessarily become the objects of ritual observances . . . , the function of such ritual being to express, and so to fix and perpetuate, the recognition of the social value of the objects to which it refers."

At the outset of this paper we juxtaposed the traditional communication media of ceremonialism and informal conversation with the new mass media of the press, film, radio, and the poster. It remains only to ask whether these new media have had any effect on the performance of annual rituals such as those we have been analyzing.

It is true that mass media have very much changed both the content of and the time devoted to informal conversations. Villagers now tend to spend less time in gossiping and yet discuss a wider variety of subjects than they used to. Conversation often amounts to a re-evaluation of accepted norms and farming methods which takes into account new information that has reached the villagers from the mass media.

truate, I was told, until 18 or 19, long after they have married.) Husbands thus attach little importance to presence or absence of a hymen. A bride is nonetheless supposed to be a virgin on her first marriage, and so on the morning after her defloration her parents-in-law look for a bloodstain on the bed. If she is not in fact a virgin one of the couple will usually draw a little blood from some part of the body so as to make a stain. Whether or not the groom is responsible for her previous loss of virginity he will want a bloodstain to be found, for otherwise his parents may think he has fallen in love with a loose, unworthy girl. Badagas proverbially take a dim view of young women: "A young ox and a young girl are both inconstant: do not trust them" (Metz 1864: 94).

They have a kind of second wedding ceremony, held at about the seventh month of a girl's first pregnancy. The sexual aspect of this second ceremony is that on the following night the couple are supposed to sleep together and have intercourse. While the pregnant girl is not impure at the time of the actual ceremony, both she and her husband are considered so on the following morning. It is a ritual requirement that she carry all of their bedding to some stream, but not the usual water source, and wash it clean.

3.10. Badaga men, and less commonly women, can get a disease called *kanne no:* ("first sickness"), which is caused either by a young man's first sexual experience or by too much sexual activity in his early married years. It is a relatively rare illness, recognizable from the face and the accompanying fever. A patient is served only "cooling" foods till he recovers; he rests at home, and is also given *kodaṅgu soppu* (made from velvety patchouli, etc.) as for any fever. The parents stop the couple from sleeping together for the time being; until fully recovered the patient will be permitted little or no coitus by his elders. This illness is said to be quite dangerous, whereas "too little" intercourse is not thought to have any bad effect on the body.

Menstrual Practices

3.11. Badaga therapists do not know why menstruation occurs, and simply attribute it to God's will. The intervals can vary, I was told, from 16 to 40 days, tending to be shorter in fat women. Among young women menses occurs every 18, 19 or 20 days, with 22 days as perhaps the maximum. With older women the period comes on

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the average after 25 days, and may even span two months. Girls are reported to begin at 14 or 15 years, but in some cases menarche comes at 12.

These are the simple physiological facts as Badagas know them, yet the social implications of menstruation are anything but simple. "Menses (*olavu*) pollutes nine houses; and likewise a person who has not yet washed after a meal pollutes seven houses." As this proverb underlines, the event pollutes a woman and could pollute her home too; so that it has been customary for every woman to spend a few days each month in a special menstrual hut. Every village used to have one (some still do), a fact that underlines the general threat women posed to the purity of the Badaga house. Thurston (1909: 102-03) and "Miles" (1933: 73) record that a girl might be sent to the hut on a Friday a few days before the new moon, a few months before her first menses, lest this come on an inauspicious day. Should this occur, no further ritual precaution can be taken.

At the onset of a girl's first menses she is immediately taken to the nearest river where, no matter what the weather, she takes a bath and then puts on a clean set of clothes given by her parents. The girl throws her old clothes away before bathing, or else picks them up afterwards with a stick and disposes of them. Nobody should touch polluted clothes, although non-Badaga scavengers may in fact take them away. Similarly the new clothes which a girl wears during her first menstrual seclusion will also be thrown away and never touched again.

Once these new clothes are on, she goes directly to the menstrual hut if her village still has one. Although it is no longer a common institution some villages maintain one today merely for its ritual use at a girl's first menstruation, and older women are not secluded in it. Where the hut does not exist the girl is sent off to a cowshed (probably a disused one, because this is supposed to be a sacred building); or failing that a vacant house, or at least a separate room of her own house. This latter might be built for her on one end of the veranda, particularly if it is raining heavily at the time.

Once in her hut or room the girl is under severe restrictions. She must not touch milk (Jagor 1876: 200). She cannot go to the public water source, nor should she pass near the temple or along the street where the Great House stands (that built by the founder of the village); nor should she attend any auspicious ceremony or public festival. She should not step over the village's water channel, or the

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till morning but must be completed at every house, no matter how late the hour. If necessary the girl must even knock on doors and waken people. Everyone should bless her, as her own mother has already done, with a formula wishing her: "May you, my darling, soon receive a husband, bring forth a son, build your own house and live happy" (Natesa Sastri 1892: 761; Francis 1908: 131). From this time onward the girl is really a full-fledged member of the village community. There is a rule, no longer followed, that she should now bow down to any visitor from another hamlet, whether a man or woman. More importantly she is now recognized as being ready for marriage. Traditionally her forehead would be tattooed a few days later, leaving a visible sign of her marriageability (Natesa Sastri 1892: 760; Francis 1908: 131).

3.13. The menstrual hut (*holagudi*—"pollution place") was an important institution in the lives of adult women. They were customarily secluded there for a period of five to seven days (Thurston 1909: 103; "Miles" 1933: 74). If a woman discovered her condition before washing in the morning, that day would be considered the *third* of seven days of pollution. To be more exact: in calculating those days, the second day of observable menstruation is counted as the third; but if the onset is noticed before sunrise then that same day is already counted as the nominal third day. This habit of mind is expressed in the proverb: "If dying today, it will be three days by tomorrow." Thus the entire menstrual period would cover five or six days, and not seven as informants may assert. It was the custom that on the real third day of her five secluded days a woman would bathe in cold water using bark of pellitory as soap. On the fourth day she was to repeat this bath, but could then put on a change of clothing, leave the hut, and spend part of the night on her own veranda. After cooking and eating her evening meal there she would bathe again and could then enter the outer, less sacred room of the house. Early next morning the spot where she slept was cleaned, and the woman bathed in the stream. Then she would return home, eat her meals in the outer room, and remain there until next morning, the sixth actual day, when the pollution period would terminate. During the entire period no one may touch a menstruating woman. Should a child nonetheless do so he must be washed to remove the pollution before he comes into contact with anyone else.

It was customary for women to use a kind of sanitary pad in the menstrual hut, made out of shredded bark and leaves ("Miles"

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343 amorous affairs. If a man wanted a particular girl he would note
841 when she went to the menstrual hut, and would then persuade a
837 female friend to stay in the hut with her and turn her fancy away from her husband and towards this unannounced suitor. A girl's parents or husband would therefore keep a careful watch on who else was in the hut. In a small hamlet, on the other hand, the female
343 population might be so little that a woman would often find herself
841 alone in the hut. In that case she would be afraid to sleep there by
754 herself for fear of Kurumba sorcerers and ghosts. (This fear ran coun-
715 ter to the Badaga belief that Kurumbas themselves were afraid of menstruating women, and hence would never enter the hut and secretly ravish or attack any menstruating woman through sorcery.) Because of this fear, a woman who was alone in the hut would persuade another who was due to menstruate in the next few days to tell her family the period had already begun, so that the two could sleep together in the hut. This ruse would not allow the second woman to spend extra time in the hut however, and she might well continue to menstruate after leaving it, but would keep the matter
841 secret. Sometimes a woman would be already pregnant when she
843 entered the hut for such purely social reasons. Since the number
343 of weeks until she came to term might be calculated from the last day a woman was in the hut, it therefore could happen that she gave birth in what seemed to be the eighth month of pregnancy.

841 When a group of women were together in the menstrual hut they
517 could engage in a number of interesting activities. The only work they were permitted to do was to gather firewood for use there, prepare their own food, and wash their clothes (at a place separate from
[304] the usual spot). It was generally while in the hut that an adolescent girl underwent tattooing. The only game the women played was
[524] "eye-bean," an ancient Old World game which involved the redistribution of beans in a series of a dozen depressions. In general girls were not allowed to play this until they had their first pregnancy, but younger girls did play it too while in the menstrual hut.

841 Cooking vessels kept in the hut were common to the whole village,
415 and were in constant use. There was no need to destroy or even purify them after use, since everyone involved with them was in a state
264 of pollution. Foodstuffs could be given to the women by their rela-
[783] tives, but it was taboo to give them cooked foods. No pot, basket or cloth would be taken to the hut with food, since it could not be taken back home afterwards. Thus when a woman in the hut was

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In a similar arrangement an old man's younger brother slept with the new wife and begot children who were treated as her husband's. Such practices now seem to have stopped. "Children for an older man are a weight on his shoulder," says the proverb.

3.16. In keeping with the idea that intercourse should satisfy a couple, Badagas are familiar with a variety of coital approaches—although nothing like that described in the *Kama Sutra*. The psychological benefits of making love are acknowledged in a proverb: "[If husband and wife are] not on good terms before midnight, they will play after midnight."

Badagas customarily take a bath before having sexual relations, and under normal conditions are both nude when making love. Older couples are generally naked in bed, but nowadays the younger people wear pyjamas or underwear. Young men, particularly if educated in a city, know how to use foreplay to get a woman excited. Until European films were seen in the Nilgiris, however, mouth-kissing was not indulged in, although men did kiss and bite the neck, cheeks and breasts of their women. Inside the house the normal position for intercourse is lying on a bed, but if they have to hurry the couple will use a standing position or stoop over something, with the man entering from behind, as indeed they do when in the forest. Parents may have relations in the same bed their children are sleeping in, in which case they will lie on their sides during intercourse. Curiously, a couple can do this with their baby lying beside them, and it will not be affected by the "bad wind" of coitus; whereas if they do it in another room they must not come near their baby until they have cleaned themselves and put on fresh clothes, for fear that the baby will be affected. Furthermore, if they also have some older children they may take them into the same bed with the baby before having intercourse in that very bed; the belief here being that even though the other children are weaned they too could be affected by this very dangerous "wind" if they were sleeping in another room. Young couples with no children generally sleep in a small room by themselves, on the end of the veranda. If their ageing parents live with them, the couple may leave the inner room to them and sleep under the wide shelf in the outer room. Otherwise a couple will occupy the inner room at night. If a man has two wives he usually has relations with one in the presence of the other, all three sharing the same bed.

Although a young bride should be the first to get up in the morn-

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833 ing and start the housework, she would pollute the food were she
183 not to wash first. She must bathe after having had intercourse, and older women in the household watch to see that she does so. It
[761] would be a major sin for a woman to attend to her children in the morning without bathing first, and if her child dies in infancy her husband's mother may blame her for having killed it by this terrible omission.

833 Young couples generally have coitus with the man lying on top of the girl, his legs outside hers. If this does not satisfy her she wraps her legs around his buttocks. Otherwise she will certainly be more satisfied if she sits astride her husband while he sits on the edge of the bed. If necessary she will fondle him to arouse his enthusiasm. It is said that one needs a large penis to satisfy a woman properly.
[820] Without both testicles the penis will not stiffen effectively: this is indeed their only function. These intimate details can become a subject of ribaldry when a girl is noticed to be visiting her parents too often: people may chide the husband for having a small organ, or suggest he try the second and third positions just described, or else nickname him *O:gotte* ("one-ball").

The amount of sexual activity depends on the husband's stamina and interest, and becomes progressively less as he gets older. Until their first child is born a couple may do it several times nightly, two or three times a week. After a birth has occurred they probably do it less often, and should not recommence coitus until the fifth month after the birth. Young married men boast to their friends about the number of times they have done it in one night; but such statements are necessarily prone to exaggeration. The terminology used
[196] in such bawdy discussions may range from *ke:vatu* (a noun — "fuck") to the somewhat more seemly *ma:duvatu* (similarly translatable, but literally meaning "doing"). *Katira* ("it makes, does") is generally used of animals, but may occur in reference to a lusty man in the phrase *e:ru katira*, "to fuck like a buffalo." (This is considered something of a compliment.) The usual pattern of intercourse seems to recognize a "safe period." Couples have coitus once
833 or twice in the period between the sixth and the fourteenth or fif-
842 teenth days after menstruation, which they rightly consider to be the period when conception may occur. Those however who want no more children have intercourse only from the twenty-fifth or twenty-sixth day after the previous menstruation.

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butter, palm sugar, and several limes will always be required and the husband should have purchased them a few days beforehand. Even the black peppers and other ingredients for the special curry given the woman after her delivery must all be provided by her husband. However, it is common nowadays for the girl's father to buy all of these materials, and her husband to reimburse him in cash.

4.9. In the old days delivery occurred only on the veranda, and never in the house, because it was an impure act. There were no separate menstrual huts for this, as with the neighbouring Kotas. Now the birth generally takes place in one of the outer rooms of the house. Some women even give birth in the inner, more sacred room, while others go to a hospital. In the old days however a screen of planks or blankets would be erected on the veranda to protect the woman from wind and cold; for then as now her body was bare during the delivery. A loincloth is simply put over her shoulders for a little warmth. Now that the event occurs inside the house though, the door is closed to keep in the heat.

When the woman starts to labour, people in her house call for a village midwife, who takes charge of the situation. It is said that in the old days the grinding stone was in front of the woman for her to hold on to. Nowadays, following their experience in hospitals, some women are delivered lying flat on their backs on the floor, with face upwards. More usually the woman kneels on the ground, with a girl in front of her to support her. Her legs are apart, and an experienced midwife is behind her to catch the baby before it falls onto the floor. During the actual delivery the midwife checks that the umbilical cord is not around the baby's neck. In some instances gingelly oil is applied to the vagina to ease the delivery. (This is referred to in a proverb about there being an appropriate time and place for everything: "It is like delivering a child where oil is seen.")

In the old days midwives knew how to put a hand inside and pull the baby out, and some can still do this (after carefully cutting their nails and washing the hands): it is only done as a last resort with a difficult delivery, though. Before that in a difficult case the midwife feels the surface of the stomach to tell if the baby is in the wrong position. If it is, then the mother is made to place her head on the pounding stone, and five or six women support her as she balances there, upside down with her legs held up in the air. Then

844 A piece of garlic is tied with
757 cloth to each of her big toes, to prevent her from catching cold. (If
751 she gets a heavy cold, the illness is called *janni*, and the tempera-
ture of the body is below normal. Then a liquid medicine can be
846 administered). Some five to ten minutes after the oil is given, the
mother is offered coffee with palm jaggery. This is given to all
women after delivery.

844 4.12. The afterbirth comes a half-hour or so after the delivery,
either before or after the mother has taken a bath. If it is slow in
coming she will have the bath without waiting for it; although in
earlier days it was customary to wait for t. Nowadays goverament
midwives, if called in, pull the afterbirth *ex utero* if it does not im-
mediately follow the delivery; and some others do this too.

844 Badaga women seldom go to hospital or even call a doctor
758 during child-birth. If they do so one can be sure that things
743 are very serious and often complicated. One day a Badaga
woman was carried to the hospital . . . It was a case of retain-
ed placenta of three weeks duration, as the relatives told us.
The woman was semi-conscious and pale with the loss of
blood . . . (Ketti Medical Mission 1953:4).

657 With the increase in government programs for training midwives,
such tragedies are becoming very rare. Some Badagas apparently
knew of a medicine which they also provided Todas with to release
a delayed placenta (Rivers 1906: 323).

844 Next, the floor where the child was born is washed with a cow-
788 dung solution. A handful of hay is lit with a brand from the fire
and circled around several times over the damp spot. The burnt
hay is then thrown away and the firebrand hit on the floor at that
751 point. The same place is then scratched with an adze, for it is said
that if this is not done the child will get itches on the skin. (No
spells are spoken; and it is not important to get the cowdung dried
by the fire.)

844 The afterbirth is then carried by a woman to somewhere, gene-
rally within the hamlet boundary, where it can be buried. This can
be anywhere distant from the settlement. Men may come to help
783 dig the hole, but will not touch the polluting afterbirth. It is bund-
led up in the dirty cloths or sacks, all of which are buried with it.
A big stone and thorn bushes are put on top of the burial place,
simply to make sure that no jackals or dogs eat it, for Badagas do

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not savour the idea of that; (although if it happens nothing in particular follows). Should the infant die shortly afterwards, before it has been named, it too is treated as afterbirth material and buried at the usual cemetery. If someone asks the mournful family who has died, the answer must be "No one."

4.13. For the first day or two after birth the mother is given a hot bath four or five times daily. Up till this time she cannot bathe herself, but must have some woman help her. After that time she bathes herself in hot water, twice daily until 25 to 30 days after delivery, and thereafter once daily. Always, the water used is hot. The baby is given a bath three times daily for the first eight days, then twice a day till the nineteenth day, and thereafter once daily, in the evening only.

In the old days, the newly delivered mother was given a special preparation of little millet. This was first baked, and then boiled till it was a mushy porridge (Birch 1838: 104). Now she eats a non-liquid curry. For that peppercorns are fried in a clarified butter, then ground up on the curry grinder. Then some garlic is fried, and salt, tamarind and clarified butter mixed with it while it is kept warm beside the fire. A limited amount of this food is given to the mother twice daily until the fourth or fifth day after delivery, by an old woman who will restrict the quantity even though the mother might want more. Thereafter, for the next 20 to 40 days, according to the state of the mother's health, she continues with this as her morning meal, but in the evenings has paddy rice and lentil soup. She can take a small amount of milk, even from the day of her delivery. This can only be cow's milk, and must be boiled before drinking. It is recognized that a woman who has given birth may appear weak and ugly, and repeated births can lead to ill-health. A proverb puts it this way: "The appearance of a woman who has just given birth to one child is like the appearance of a heifer which has given birth that day."

No woman who has given birth may touch any household utensils till the third, fifth, seventh or ninth day after the first full or new moon, I was told; alternatively it has been reported that she must first see the crescent moon before the period of pollution can end (Thurston 1909: 109). She should be given no work for eight days before or eight days after her delivery: during that fortnight her husband must provide for all her needs, even if he is on the point of divorcing her. It used to be that after five, seven,

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846 821 783 nine or 15 days she might begin to work in the house again (Jagor 1876: 199). Earlier yet, for her first birth, a woman would stay in the pollution hut until the next waning of the moon. In later confinements she would remain in the hut for only three days (Birch 1838: 104). The mother of twins, even if poor, should however 845 854 stay at home looking after them for at least three months, without doing any outside work.

"A girl who has delivered is a good sight; a field with good 846 [539] crops is a good sight," according to one proverb. Within a month of the birth, on an auspicious day, mother and child return to her [777] husband's house. The party must number (including both of them) at least five persons, and must be of an odd number unless it ex- [801] ceeds 21.

> 846 788 On arrival there, the infant is placed near the feet of an old man standing by a lamp within the milk-house. Placing his right hand over the head of the infant, the old man blesses it, and a feast is held, before the commencement of which two cups, one containing milk, and the other cooked rice, are produced. All the relations take up a little of the rice and milk, and touch the tongue of the baby with them. (Thurston 1909:109)

843 585 851 If a woman becomes pregnant for the twentieth time by the same husband (a previous marriage does not count), then, whether all the offspring are living or not, the couple go right through the wedding and seventh-month-of-pregnancy ceremonies again. These are performed on a lavish scale, even if the husband has to borrow substantially.

The Form and Sex of the Child

858 539 4.14. A proverb asks, "If a mother gives birth to a male child, will the father object to it?" Obviously he will not, since it is a blessing to the family (Verghese 1963: 420). The same idea is also expressed thus: "By delivering a son she is like a prima donna standing on a vantage point and calling out;" or "The man who has begotten a son and the man who has planted a coconut [tree] will not spoil." Another saying puts it quite succinctly: "A strong boy, a weak girl;" and yet another emphasizes that girl babies are not much wanted: "Even though you repeatedly tell her, she is

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only giving birth to girls." Another states: "If a girl is begotten she is useless; if a boy is begotten he is an asset." Yet another proverb puts it thus: "Girls are a disappointment, but the eldest son is like a hearth." Daughters are accordingly cared for less well than sons during infancy, particularly if the couple already have several daughters. Nonethelesss there is no evidence of the female infanticide that used to be practised by Todas.

> The Badagas will welcome the birth of a son or a daughter with equal gladness. The most probable reason for this is that while Hindus see an increasing burden and expense with the hbirt of a daughter, the Badagas see a future livelihood because the daughter as well as the son helps in the fields. (Rhiem 1900: 503)

Even if they are a blessing, "One who has given birth is seven times as ill-fated as one who is without children:" they can be very troublesome!

If a child is deformed since before the birth, that is God's will and nothing can be done about it; but if any damage was done to the baby during the delivery, that can perhaps be rectified. Immediately after the delivery the midwife checks that all the limbs are in order, and at this time can squeeze the head to make it rounder if it seems very long, or can pinch up the nose if it looks flattened.

If a child is born deformed but living, it is believed that either its parents or its patrilineal ancestors committed some great sin; whereas if the deformed child is born dead no such sin was involved. Many Badagas are born with eleven fingers or toes; but this minor matter is considered to be neither lucky nor inauspicious. Badly deformed children of either sex are still encouraged to live and are not done away with; this is even more true of twins, who bring more respect to the parents than a single birth would. However, children blind or deformed from birth are extremely rare, and giants are unknown among the Badagas; dwarfs occasionally are found. One man, about a metre high, was briefly married and divorced, was a highly respected man who took an active part in the village council, and died in his sixties. He was nicknamed "Groundling" but was respected because his conduct was excellent and he came from a good family. He had several brothers of normal stature but was respected more than they were.

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853 the woman is startled, or if she comes into contact with a "bad wind" as we discuss below (5.4). When a nursing mother comes (262) from a family known for its low milk yield she is given butter-milk, made from boiled cow's milk, and with it a rich diet of clarified butter and food made from little millet. She does no hard work and enjoys complete rest. (Nothing is rubbed onto the breast.)

5.3. If a nursing mother is eating irregularly, or having sweet things, or too much food, such behaviour can affect the nature of her milk. To counteract its poorer quality a certain medicine can be given to the child, but only between its fifth and twelfth months (generally just in the fifth and sixth). It is made from two plants, *homogu* and false privet, used in the proportion 2:1 and baked with clarified butter. The material is then ground on a special stone and mixed at the same time with some of the mother's milk. A pinch of salt is usually added. Finally half as much butter as the volume of this mixture is added to it, and the resultant medicine is divided into three parts, each rolled into a ball 2 cms. in diameter. The baby swallows one of these balls on the morning, a second in the evening, and the third the next morning.

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If a nursing mother eats too many sweet things, she may transmit worms to her baby through the breast-milk. In fact, small children are much more liable to worms than their mothers. A woman thus may not have worms while her nursing infant does; and if she eats too many sweets in the eighth or ninth month of pregnancy, worms may appear in her child during the first three months of life.

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5.4. A nursing mother is regularly afraid that if she goes near a corpse or smells another birth, or if she smells anyone other than her own husband in the early morning who has not yet bathed since coitus the night before, the breasts may cease to give milk. Some are even afraid that a sudden noise will have this effect, and others are afraid of hearing talk of any terrifying subject. This phenomenon of a "bad wind" associated with the polluting aspect of coitus, birth and death works in devious ways. When a newly delivered mother is in the room before another woman's delivery occurs she can stay there and the smell at the time of birth will not affect her; yet if she enters a room where a birth has just occurred the bad odour there can affect the flow of her milk. If an adult dies in her presence her milk is not threatened by a

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"bad wind" unless the death occurred in her own home. The effect of a "bad wind" the woman has encountered can also be felt by her baby or transmitted through the milk to her baby, and then it will make him sick.

One or two days after a wedding the bride, by this time perhaps no longer a virgin, returns on a belief ceremonial visit to her parents' home. As she enters the village the woman accompanying her calls out for people to keep infants and nursing mothers out of sight. The bride can set eyes on unweaned infants, but their parents must make sure that neither the children themselves nor their mothers see the girl, lest their milk dry up by reason of the "bad wind" associated with the girl's recent sexual activity. Were a nursing mother to see the bride she would probably curse her, and this could cause infertility in the latter.

More generally it is felt that the most dangerous "bad wind" would be one associated with a person who came to look at the baby just after having had intercourse. Such a person should first take a bath, then put on some clean clothes and wait at least half-an-hour. In the same way if an apparently pure man comes to visit a baby and he has travelled more than a mile he will bring a "bad wind" with him. He should therefore wait in the yard or on the veranda for a short time before entering the house. In this situation the mother would even wait the appropriate amount of time before bowing to his hand if the visitor were her own father. If a nursing mother is obliged to be near a corpse, she also will take a bath and change afterwards before going near her baby. Should an unweaned baby die all other nursing mothers in the village and neighbouring hamlets are expected to visit the bereaved house before the next sunset. They ask the unfortunate mother how she is feeling. Badagas believe that if any nursing mother who was inregular contact with this woman failed to observe this common courtesy, her own infant would soon become ill. And if such a woman nonetheless does fail to visit she must not set eyes on the bereaved mother again until after the next new or the next full moon. This is said to be because the latter might become envious on seeing the other mother nursing, and her sorrow would somehow affect that woman. The nursing mother who failed in this customary courtesy would be afraid that her breasts would dry up, should she meet the bereaved woman shortly after burial of the dead child.

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853 751 783 A woman affected by a "bad wind" of any kind can counteract it by going out beyond the territorial boundaries of her village and then returning, on the way finding the two plants *moḷḷe muttu giḍu* and cardamom. She should rub them together in her palms, adding a little water and rabbit dung. Then if she swallows this preventive mixture before nursing the child it will not be affected by the "bad wind."

853 757 755 5.5. There are two medicines that can be administered to a mother if her milk stops flowing because of some frightening experience. The first one applies if her baby is less than four or five months old. The therapist sitting with the mother has a whole lime in one hand and with it some sacred ash (*vibuṭi*) or occasionally wood ash. She moves the lime around clockwise (from her viewpoint) in front of the mother, while saying: "If there is any bad air, or if she has had a fright, may the milk now flow!" The sacred ash is then smeared on the mother's brow and she eats a little of it too. Next the lime is cut in half, and the mother drinks its juice. This procedure is followed every morning for three days. If the baby is older than four months another medicine is given instead. Half a glass of the juice of the cockspur flower is drunk by the mother before each morning meal, for three or five consecutive days.

862 5.6. Before weaning the child is already being fed by hand by some relative and this continues until at about four or five years he feeds himself from a separate plate or leaf. From the start of the third month of life, and certainly before the start of the fifth month, the baby is given solid food. In earlier times more than today this was a good quality of little millet; now good rice is more usual. It is mixed with water or cow's milk—but not buffalo's—and boiled in a small pot (*kuḍikke*) used only for this purpose. A pinch of salt is added and perhaps some butter or clarified butter. The baby is given this once daily during the first month of eating, and thereafter twice daily.

539 862 One proverb exhorts people to be generous in feeding enough to the children: "Neither should the rice become half, nor the sister's children become weak." Or sarcastically, "See that person dance with half-empty stomach!" (Metz 1864: 97). Another refers however to the greediness of some children: "If you give a child, which has scarcely spoiled flour to eat, a cake, it will ask sugar to put upon it" (Metz 1864: 96).

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visit the child's home instead. The man bathes himself, puts on clean clothes, and then sits facing the child, the therapist being on the west side and the child to his east. If the child is restive some old lady holds it. That morning before sunrise, and before any water has been brought to the house, a woman, who must be in a pure state, brings a full pot of water there: it must be from a spring. On the way back with it the woman puts three, five, seven, nine or 11 dead-nettle flowers and three pieces of Bermuda grass into the water. The therapist now picks out the grass and stirs it around in the water while he says the spells. Then he splashes the water from the grass into the child's face, and the child is of course startled. This is done three times, and after the third splashing the child must immediately be moved away to some other spot. He is then made to drink a little of the water from the pot; and the flowers are taken out of it and placed on the child's head. The pot is then carried away and the water poured out in a place where no one will walk.

This is the usual treatment for children aged three to ten. As unweaned infants cannot easily drink the water another procedure is followed with them. The mother brings her baby to the therapist early in the morning. He unties one end of his turban while the rest of it stays on his head, and flicks this end into the child's face as he says the spells. As an alternative to using the turban a twig with three or four leaves on it can be waved in the baby's face as the therapist says the spells.

It is believed that evil spirits may enter a child's body while he is startled or frightened. A therapist can drive such a spirit out by startling the child again. It is probably for this reason that the procedures just described (5.40, 5.41) are followed through (they do not however work with adults). The therapist, usually a man, also says a spell

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three peppercorns into paste which is bandaged onto the cut. It is said to stop a swelling and infection. For some sixty years past a third species has been used; it is the hemp agrimony, and it supposedly works quicker. Leaves of any of these four species are nowadays ground up with a pinch of salt and applied thus to the wound. A bandage is then tied over it.

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BRUISE (*kandalu*)

6.14. Badagas have no cure for blisters. If these develop on the hand a person continues to work, since his hand must toughen if he is to continue at it anyway. Similarly, no treatment is given for bruises.

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THERMAL BURNS: DRY (*benda huṇṇu*)

6.15. For a burn, the therapist grinds up leaves of *kudure ko:ku* (the name of several pennywort species), then mixes them with slime from some stagnant water, and after applying this to the wound ties a clean cloth over it.

There is a proverb referring to saliva, oil or any similar first-aid that might cool the sensation of the burning: "He won't [even] put saliva on a burnt hand." It refers to someone too selfish to help another even to this minimal extent.

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One type of burn is not treated at all. If a man returns to the Badaga community from jail, or from having been a Christian convert, he goes through a purification which includes burning the tip of the tongue with a piece of glowing charcoal or gold wire. He must simply allow the wound to heal.

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6.16. Another treatment is to take one of the larger leaves of the castor-oil plant, heat it, and put it mixed with gingelly oil onto a wound.

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THERMAL BURNS : WET (*benda huṇṇu*)

6.17. For a scald the therapist grinds some prince's feather leaves and mixes them with twice that amount of some slime from stagnant water. The mixture is then applied to the scald.

Animal Bites

136

6.18. As every child knows, many Nilgiri animals bite. The commonest, as well as the smallest of

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842 be that way for every thousand women who are. It is not assumed that a women is barren if her first marriage produces no children, however: the couple should divorce and both remarry, in order to have children with other spouses. By this procedure it will be seen whether a person is really infertile. Badagas believe infertility is caused by a (754) curse, or by sin done in one's previous life, or by (783) the sins of one's ancestors. In some villages a childless man would allow his brother to have (837) coitus with his wife in an attempt to gain off- (835) spring.

842 I was unable to identify any definite medicine for infertility. A barren girl was inspected nude by 759 a therapist and told that "she was intended to be a male and would never have childern." (Sometimes the therapist could tell from a girl's face if she were incurable, and told her so.) Nonetheless 842 the female therapist later on (around 1930) made 759 a positive suggestion for curing the barren girl: 755 she should get hold of a small boy just after he 839 had defecated, and while his penis was in a somewhat erect state; she should then gently suck on his organ. This was probably a reflection of the (827) idea offered somewhere in the Puranas that the semen of small boys is in vaporous form; later it becomes liquid; and in old age it has become solid. It is highly doubtful, however, whether any Badagas believe a woman can be inseminated through the mouth.

842 This particular therapist did have a medicine 759 for infertility, but apparently died with her secret long before I worked in her villages. She did know of a plant that cured the affliction, and once mentioned to a daughter-in-law that the cure was very difficult and that she had very high standards for its proper performance. In administering the medicine she also told women they should love their husbands to the utmost, for they were usually barren simply because their minds were not

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all over the patient by a therapist of the same sex, and this is only done at night-time. In addition the patient must swallow at least three mouthfuls of the medicine. A bed is prepared in a hot part of the house, and the patient lies on it and is entirely covered with as many rugs and blankets as possible. After 20 to 90 minutes of this the patient, who is not even allowed to bare his head, breaks into a sweat. If the patient is not cured on the first night of this treatment (generally because he has just had sexual relations), it is continued for the next two nights or even for five consecutive nights. If he is still not cured by then the therapist knows that the illness is something other than Small Wind.

Should the patient want to go out in the morning after receiving this treatment, his face and feet are washed and water sprinkled over his body first. During the days he is being treated his diet is generally rice with onions, green leaves (*soppu*, "greens"), buttermilk, curd and some salt. Until completely cured he should have no chili.

6.72. Leprosy is called *doḍḍa no:* ("big disease") as a euphemism for its real name, *kusta ro:ga*, which Badagas would not generally utter. It is thought of as the worst punishment that can come through illness for the heavy sins of one's ancestors. Neither the Badagas nor the Kurumba specialists have a cure for leprosy, although those patients who can afford it take opium continuously to ease the pain. People avoid taking girls in marriage from a leprous family, although leprous men are allowed to mix in public because the disease is not thought to be contagious. Dead lepers are always buried in large quantities of salt, and not cremated.

Other general illnesses are dealt with elsewhere in this volume, in Chapters 5, 7 and 8.

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164 will neither eat nor sleep as usual. Throughout it he should always be covered with cloths, and these can only be of cotton, never wool. The covering is necessary to prevent wind from blowing on the itches. The pus in the spots would exude, but were it to be blown by wind it would go inside the body instead, causing the patient to feel very sick or even to die. The house
164 must always remain ritually pure while someone has
784 chicken-pox; thus men may not smoke in it, the pare-
nts must not have sexual relations, and if the patient
(783) is still an unweaned baby its mother must not lie on a bed or on matting, but must sleep on some sacks laid on the floor. During this period nobody throughout the entire hamlet may prepare any foods in oil, and oil may only be used for lamps. When women are cooking in the patient's house, he is taken to another house or at least to the outer room, since the smoke from cooking can make his infection worse. Bands of
(177) Kota and Kurumba musicians, both lower status and impure local tribes, are on no account allowed into the hamlet while chicken-pox prevails there, even though they would normally attend at Badaga weddings, funerals and certain festivals. Therefore if a
164 person happens to die while there is chicken-pox in the
766 hamlet the corpse will quickly be buried or cremated;
177 but then later, when there is no longer any chicken-pox, a band of Kota musicians will come and the traditional funeral ceremonies will be observed, using a stick in place of the corpse. Of all the vari-
164 ous taboos that come into play during chicken-pox,
784 that against sexual relations is the most crucial, that against cooking with oil the second, and that against Kota or Kurumba music the third most important.

757 People suffering from this disease are given
758 "cooling" foods to eat, and preferably no "heating"
(261) foods at all. If the patient is an unweaned infant his mother has to adopt this food restriction too. Beyond this, there is also a technique for treating chicken-pox. On the third day after some spots

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from Burliya:r.

The cure for this ailment should preferably begin on the auspicious days Friday, Sunday or Tuesday. If the need is urgent it can also start on a Monday or a Wednesday; but never a Thursday or Saturday. The curing is done every night for at least three days, and it may continue till the fifth, seventh, ninth or eleventh day from the start. Usually the cure is done twice nightly; but if the case is very serious it will be done three times a night, at about 1900 hrs., midnight, and 0500 hrs. The curing can begin right after sunset, but it is generally started later, after supper. It is done at night because the house must remain closed throughout, including all windows.

When the therapist brings all the medical materials he has collected, he hides them somewhere in the bus nearby rather than bring them straight to the patient's house. These materials must not be brought near children, not because the children are impure, but because some of the plants are probably poisonous and the Indian willow is hallucinogenic.

Before he starts in the evening the women clean the house and sprinkle liquid cowdung on the floor. If there is any meat in the house it should be taken out before the cleaning begins. As the sickness is caused by a god, the people present while it is being treated must be pure. For this reason no women are allowed to stay, except those who ceased menstruation at least 12 years before. No children under 18 are allowed to stay either, "because they may be affected by some bad smell," and contract the disease. None of the men present should smoke during the night either. One of them may be allowed to go into the bathroom and urinate or smoke, but only if his need is great.

Only when all the women and children have left for the night does the therapist go and bring the hidden plants into the house. The door is then shut behind him, and must not be opened again

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watery medicine over the patient's body. He does not rub the body, but allows the patient to sit by the fire and dry.

It will be recalled that the therapist brought strips of bark from the Indian willow, which were not mixed into the medicine. After completing the treatment the therapist puts one of these long strips around the patient's neck, and two more—one above the elbow and one at the ankle—on the side of the body which is partially paralyzed. These strips are knotted very loosely: for it is permissible for them to fall off, provided they do so of their own accord and not because someone takes them off.

When his tongue cannot move it is because the Big Wind struck him there. The compress is then dabbed all over the body in the usual manner, but a liquid medicine is given the patient too (unless the dabbing of his body loosens his tongue). This medicine is the juice of the St. John's wort. It is obtained by slashing the bark and waiting a day or two for the juice to exude. It is then drunk diluted with a little hot water.

It is now alright for the patient to have coffee if he wants it. Then he lies down and is covered with several rugs. He is only wearing a loin-cloth, except that in a very serious case he will still be wearing the wet cloth on which the medicine has been dabbed.

The patient then sleeps. In the early morning the therapist orders the people present to clean the house and sprinkle liquid cowdung on the floor before the door is opened. Just before the cleaning starts he takes the pot of medicine upstairs and leaves it there. No women or children should go upstairs while it is there. After the purification of the house the therapist opens the door and goes out onto the yard to pray. Only after he has returned to the house are other members of the family allowed to go outside too. Before they

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759 that if this habit became general, the therapists would make themselves equally accessible to all patients.

844 There is a local tradition that a midwife should be given a new
431 dress by the child's father after a delivery. It is actually given at the child's naming ceremony or else on the last day of the funeral observation should the neonate die. For the last 15 years of her life Sithamma did not deliver babies herself, but was sometimes in attendance and instructed her assistants. People still offered her the dress, but she blessed it and asked them to give it to somebody in need of it.

Midwives

759 10.6. Through the centuries there has been one special role, out-
554 side of the family, that has always been held by women, and that is the role of midwife. It has been a position that commands respect for the skill that she must have. Not every woman of course is a potential midwife; but the interested younger women receive some training whenever a delivery occurs in their village. A midwife quite often becomes more than a deliverer of babies. Partly because she is asked to minister to the varied health needs of parturient women and the newborn, she is trusted and consulted and may in time become skilled as a curer of other physical disorders as well. Sometimes she supervises birth among the domestic animals.

759 Often there is more than one midwife in a village; other women
844 are asked to come to a delivery if they have helped with one
842 before, and of course the girls who are learning midwifery attend. Yet other women will want to come and watch, and barren women may feel that if they attend they might also become pregnant through the magic of contiguity. The small room may therefore be quite crowded and stuffy.

759 Midwives go to their work without necessarily washing first. A
844 midwife is polluted by each birth—for three days if it is the
183 mother's first delivery, for one day otherwise ; but this does not
515 imperil a midwife's status in the community. If it is a woman's first delivery, the midwife throws her own clothes away, otherwise she just washes them. A high-status Lingayat such as Sithamma removes her *linga* emblem before beginning at the polluting

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task, and does not put it on again till she has bathed herself at the end of the pollution period.

Today each cluster of villages (i.e. Panchayat Board) has one trained nurse and two or three midwives appointed by the State Government. The later are just experienced Badaga midwives with no formal training who happen to have been recommended for the position.

Exorcists and Shamans

10.7. Badaga exorcists are always male, and are very few in number. As often as not Badagas' ghosts have to be exorcized by non-Badaga exorcists. These men may also have lesser therapeutic skills, such as making talismans to ward off fevers and evil influences from the children who wear them. The idiosyncratic nature of exorcism is sufficiently indicated by the examples in Chapter 8 and calls for no further elaboration here.

The most feared *mantrava:dis* (shamans) in the Nilgiris were members of the Kurumba tribe, one of whom might be "called in on all occasions of blight and murrain to propitiate or scare the demon of disease"—if such there be (Breeks 1873: 53). Though this may still occasionally happen, I find no record of Kurumbas acting as exorcists to the Badagas, even though they did offer much supernatural protection to them from the sorcery of other malicious Kurumbas ; and they do sometimes try to cure the sick. Thus, "In 1891, the inmates of a single Kurumba but were said to have been murdered, and the hut burnt to ashes, because one of the family had been treating a sick Badaga child, and failed to cure it. . . . Again, in 1900, a whole family of Kurumbas were murdered, of which the head, who had a reputation as a medicine man, was believed to have brought disease and death into a Badaga village." (Thurston 1912: 233-34 ; also 1909 : 86). The Badagas were never so brutal with their own therapists, but the latter never seemed to be holding the threat of sorcery over the heads of their fellows. The worst that an unpopular therapist might have to suffer would be the mockery of an appropriate proverb; for instance, "He has healed others, but cannot cure himself" (Metz 1864 :95), or "It is half bad if you do something [wrong] when you know about it; entirely bad if you do it when you are ignorant."

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or ear-rings, then her husband will die. If anyone dreams of a male buffalo, there will soon be a death in the village, probably among the dreamer's relatives (since Ya:ma, the Hindu god of death, comes riding on a buffalo). If one dreams of a woman approaching in a red *sa:ri*, this means a contagious disease will soon affect his house, his relatives or his village, usually through the disease-bearing goddess. Sometimes a person dreams of a woman in a red *sa:ri* leaving the village where there is an epidemic: this means the infection will now end.

Causation of Disease

10.17. The Badagas neither recognize any particular god as responsible for creating or curing all diseases, nor consider any one single health factor to cause all illness. As we have already seen, only a few of the diseases that Badagas cure are known by them to have a specific cause. Nevertheless we will briefly review here the variety of causes that therapists can cite.

(*a*) There are five diseases that are visited upon people by a goddess : these we have treated in detail above (7.1-7.6). A similar kind of causation was recognized for "Big Wind," where a bad spirit or deity was believed to have flicked a corner of its invisible clothing against the patient's body. Infertility in a woman is ultimately the will of God, although its immediate cause may in some instances be the failure of the couple to love each other sufficiently. Aside from these instances, however, the Badagas do not consider other chronic illnesses or bodily deformities to be inflicted by the gods : they are rather viewed as the effect of unknown sins committed by the victims themselves in previous incarnations. The will of a god and the effect of one's own or one's ancestors' sins cannot altogether be separated, however. If a person gets smallpox, for example, it means that he has done something impure; and in curing him the therapist must pray to Ma:riamma, the smallpox goddess, to forgive the patient's sins. In this way the curing process pleases the goddess and she may therefore oblige by doing what is required of her.

(*b*) Mental illness is caused by a bad spirit or bad ghost getting into the body. It is believed, on the other hand, that a person can become strong and healthy if a good ghost enters him, for it will help his body to grow.

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754 (*c*) Illness can also be the work of non-Badaga shamans or
177 sorcerers, who can send a bad spirit into the victim. As with ghost
753 possession, it has to be removed by an exorcist who knows the
[755] appropriate spells. It is said that in earlier days every Kurumba who had learnt sorcery was allowed to try his power sout. This would be decided by a formal council of the tribe, who would give the novices a stipulated period, usually one to four weeks, during which the young men could test their abilities. The Badagas would then be warned of what was to come, so the villagers could take every precaution and stay indoors at night. Each youth was permitted to kill one man by sorcery during this period. Deaths in the [961] Badaga community were also occasionally ascribed to the sorcery of Todas (Rivers 1906: 261, 635); and Kurumbas say there are many Badaga sorcerers too.

828 (*d*) Emotional and mental problems are otherwise said to be the
753 result of sins done by a man's ancestors, whereas bodily diseases
783 are in most cases an effect of the patient's own sins, as in the case of ulceration cited below (see *i*). Thus if the wealthy man becomes poor, or a poor man becomes rich, he attributes the change of fortune to the deeds of his ancestors. If a man lacks appetite, or does not enjoy his life or possessions, then he has a sickness resulting from the sins of his ancestors. There is no cure for it; and so if many cures are attempted and none works, it is thereby known that he has an illness caused by ancestral sin. Leprosy and mental diseases are seen as ultimately caused by that same sin. (As an explanation for the therapist's impotence this is of course very effective.)

732 (*e*) Often we find frequency of an infirmity being explained as
826 an effect of "blood." For example, in one family there are two girls and five boys. One boy and both girls are normal, but three other boys are deaf and dumb, and one is fairly deaf but can talk. As the situation was explained to me, "there must be some wrong in the parents' blood." This is perhaps still an allusion to ancestral sin.

753 (*f*) More immediate causes of some illnesses lie in one's diet or
261 bodily activities, even in uncleanliness. Among the dietary problems there is a general malady called *so:lu*, "over-heat," caused by eating insufficient milk products. Eating bad food, or eating too quickly, can also bring unfortunate results.

753 (*g*) Over-exertion may dislodge the colon or an artery and bring
826

582 but are not vegetarians. In most parts of India anyone claiming to be a Brahmin
614 and practicing vegetarianism would consider it a great dishonor to take a wife from -- or worse still, to marry his daughter into -- a family of meat-eaters generally acknowledged to hold lower status in the social hierarchy. It is true that marriage between Gaudas and Haruvas is not very common; but the reason lies not in any abhorrence of the idea on the part of the Haruvas, but largely in the inconvenience such a marriage causes a meat-eating family who find themselves obliged to prepare only vegetarian dishes, and in separate vessels, whenever a Haruva affine (581) is visiting them. When a Haruva man marries a Gauda girl, it is usually because (583) he owns little or no land; in such a marriage the bride's father is likely to give the (591) Haruva land in that Gauda hamlet and encourage the couple to settle down there. Such a procedure commonly occurs when the bride's father has no son of his own; but even if he has sons they may be agreeable to the arrangement when land is available. This is the only situation in which Badagas practice uxorilocal residence.

Despite the general rule among Badagas that a woman assumes the status
262 and joins the sib of her husband's family, marriage between vegetarian Haruvas
562 and non-vegetarian Gaudas does not mean that the wife has to assume her husband's
614 dietary habits. If a Haruva girl marries a Gauda, then no meat is ever cooked in his house and the wife remains a vegetarian. If her husband wants to eat meat, he will perhaps arrange to have some cooked elsewhere and eat it outside his own home. The children of this union are fully Gaudas, however, and will normally be non-vegetarians. Once the Haruva woman has died her husband's household normal-
● (783) ly revert to a non-vegetarian diet. It has been reported that, "If a Badaga [i.e. Gauda] woman marries a Haruva she has to give up meat-eating and, to cleanse (753) her, a red hot iron is put to her tongue" (Benbow 1928: 9). "After this she would

463 554 [515] all pubic hair (though Badaga women do it for themselves) because it is thought unesthetic and is found to harbor lice and ticks. The disgrace attached to this occupation is well displayed in one of the great expressions of Badaga disdain: "What can you do? -- You can't even shave my cock!" Badagas who are forced to take up barbering because of poverty never make a full-time occupation of it, especially as professional barbers are now generally available from other communities. So far as scavenging is concerned, there is no need at all to remove night 514 •(783) soil from the houses, because Badagas always defecate either in the fields and bushes, or in a special manure pit. The feces of small children are not considered 462 polluting and are easily removed from the house by anyone. All other cleaning and sweeping around the house is done by the womenfolk living there.

178 565 Those Badagas who are neither gentry nor in the poverty-stricken category show some signs of having achieved upward mobility over the past century or so. There was traditionally a class of gentry, as we know, that was distinguished by higher prestige and higher behavioral expectations. On the other hand there was in all likelihood no class of poverty-stricken Badagas obliged to become barbers or launderers until land pressure and the settlement of boundaries in the 1880's had made it difficult for the disinherited and landless to find new farming land. Only in the 80 or 90 years since that period has this landless class emerged at the bottom of the status hierarchy. And as it emerged, the prestige of the gentry was continuously on the wane. Both changes were related, as we shall see, to increas- (556) ing Badaga involvement in the Indian cash economy. The middle class of peasant families seems slowly to have decreased the gap in conduct and prestige that separated them from the gentry families; until now the cash income of a family is the clearest mark of its influence in the community. The aristocratic values of

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(1800-1963)

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Madras Tribes AW63
Kasuva

pasture on neighboring slopes, and processes milk into clarified butter. This, as the sacred clarified butter of the Badagas, is used in lamps within the dairy-temple and for ritual at Badaga festivals or temples. Any Badaga male may visit the Bergani dairy-temple and drink buttermilk given to him by the priest. Because women are polluting, no woman may enter the dairy-temple complex itself. However, women of nearby Bergani hamlet come daily to an established point at an uncontaminating distance from the dairy-temple and there receive buttermilk for household consumption. Buttermilk from processed sacred milk is also drunk by the priest. The priest never eats meat while in office and cooks his own vegetarian food. All grains, vegetables, and other foodstuffs needed by him are supplied by visitors or neighboring Bergani Badagas.

The festival honoring Masthi Hethai takes place on a Monday in mid-January. Badaga males from all over the Nilgiris come with their Hethai sticks to worship the goddess (Plate III, B). Women may also attend, but must remain an uncontaminating distance away from sacred places. Men and women wear new white clothing, must not bring anything made with leather, and eat no meat during the festival. At the festival's climax, two entranced priests believed to be possessed by Masthi Hethai predict crop yields in the coming main crop season (karbokam) and inform a few men that their wives will shortly conceive. Daily and festival rituals at Bergani are thus parts of a fertility cult related to the Badaga's economy and future prosperity.

Badaga hundis. The Badagas have for a long time used seasonal

241 with mixed plants are also maintained, but these gardens may be miles away from their owners' houses and on outer Nilgiri slopes. Because
423 land is divided equally among sons upon a father's death, extensive
428 land fragmentation has taken place. To prevent further fragmentation, there is now a tendency for sons to share and jointly manage land.
311 Communal pastures are close enough to permit the keeping of livestock
361 in communities. Individually owned and communal plots covered with
245 acacia, eucalyptus, and temperate fruit trees now occur near Badaga
137 communities. Due to intensive or slowly continued tempera-- forest
318 clearance, only a few small remnant patches of natural fore main on the slopes near many hamlets and villages.

The outstanding features of Badaga hamlets and villages are the
361 house-rows with compacted earth courtyards edged by low walls (Figure
351 17). House rows within a single community usually parallel each other and are frequently aligned in an easterly-westerly direction, but on
361 flatter terrain they may surround a courtyard on two sides. Because
364 the Badagas consider it sinful to throw waste water toward the sun,
•783 Lord Shiva's emblem, through alignment of houses in an easterly-westerly direction housewives may throw waste water through the back door or over the front courtyard wall without throwing it toward the sun.
841 One dwelling within a community house-row is set apart as a confinement place for menstruating women or women undergoing a postnatal pollution
368 period. In addition to dwellings, house-like temples are built into
243 house-rows. Grain is threshed and agricultural produce or firewood is
313 dried on the courtyards. These also serve as playgrounds for children,
857 as sites for performance of ceremonial rites, and as dance arenas
796
535

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that originally this milking of the buffaloes must have been the main vocation of the Badaga. The boy then takes the vessel thus filled with milk into his house and pours some of the sacred fluid into all his household eating vessels—a sign that from that day he has taken upon himself the responsibility of supplying the family with milk. He also throws some milk on the faces of his parents and relatives. They receive it very kindly and bless him, each in his or her turn, and request him to continue thus to milk the buffaloes and bring plenty and prosperity to the house. After this the boy enters the milk-house—the *Hâgôtu*—and places milk in his *Hope* there. From this moment and all through his life he may enter into that room, and this is therefore considered a very important ceremony.

The next important rite among the Lingâyat sect of the Badagas is the wearing of the *Liñga*, or the initiation of the boy into his religion, which takes place about the thirteenth birthday of the boy. The priest conducts this ceremony and the elder relations of the family have only to arrange for the performance of it. The priests belong to the Udaya sect of the Badagas. They live in their own villages, and are specially sent for and come up to the boy's village for the occasion. The ceremony is done generally to several Badaga boys of almost the same age on the same day. On the day appointed all the people in the Badaga village where this ceremony is to take place observe a strict fast. The cows and buffaloes are all milked very early in the morning and not a drop of the milk thus collected is given out or taken by even the tenderest children of the village who may require it very badly. The Udaya priest who has been invited arrives near the village between 10 and 12 A.M. on the day appointed. He never goes into the village, but stops near some rivulet adjacent to it. The relations of the boy or boys approach him with a new basket containing five measures of uncooked rice and pulse, ghee, &c., and a quarter of a rupee,—one fanam, as it is generally designated. The priest sits near the water-course and lights up a fire on the bank. Perfumes are thrown profusely into it and this is almost the only ceremony before the fire. The boys whose turn it is to receive the *Liñga* that day are all directed to bathe in the river. A plantain leaf cut into one foot square is placed in front of the fire towards the east of it. The *Liñgas*, kept in readiness by the parents of the boys, are now received by the priest and placed on the leaves. The boys are asked to wash them—each one the *Liñga* meant for his wearing—in water and milk. Then comes the time for the expenditure of all the collected milk of

9: Natesa Sastri U-5 (no date) 1892
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538 to be a near relation among the Baḍagas. Thus closes the third
(764) day of the funeral rites of the Baḍagas.

The third day's ceremony is a curious and significant ceremony.
764 The lighting up of the fire inside the house and the handful of straw
brought from the outside thatch to kindle it are nothing but the
(783) simple ways of purifying a polluted house which the high-caste
Hindus employ on various occasions. The wife mourning outside,
while the grain is being turned up in the *Kerachi*, shows her grief
at the idea that her lord had become a spirit among the departed
spirits and that all his connection with this world has entirely
(783) ceased. The passing of the pots over the fire are means adopted
to purify the vessels and the house after the pollution caused by
the death. During the first two days of mourning the milk-
house may not be entered, but on the third day it may be once
more used. There the first rice is spread in order that it may
acquire some of the purity of the spot and it is there that the feast
of friends and relatives is held that is considered to be the most
binding tie and the greatest token of friendship and caste union.

In the case of those who cremate the dead body the ceremony
of the first day is almost the same as with those who bury,
though there are certain differences. Up to the end of the con-
fession the ceremonies are all the same. The car is taken to the
cremation ground where a big fire has been lit and kept ready. At
some little distance from the fire a spot is chosen for cremating the
body, and at the place chosen a pit is dug. The pit is then filled
up with firewood and the body to be cremated is placed over it. It
is covered up with fuel.

When the corpse is placed on the funeral car it is sometimes
placed with the cot also and sometimes without it. When it is
(768) taken to the funeral pile, it is taken also with the cot and some-
(556) times without it; when the former is done the cot also is cremated.
Only well-to-do Baḍagas cremate the cot along with the dead body;
in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases the cot is not cremated.
If it is the body of a female the brother or brothers or some one of
her blood relations tear up into three parts lengthwise a new
cloth six cubits long and tie the pieces round the body in the region
(121) of the heart before placing it on the pile.* It is difficult to get
the meaning of this custom from the Baḍagas, but we may guess

* This is termed *Lêkaṭṭuvadu*, meaning tying up tight.